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RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF RECORDS PROCEDURE

BACKGROUND

1. Redcliff Town Council has adopted a Bylaw regarding the retention and destruction of records and documents in the Town of Redcliff and established a Record Retention Schedule.
2. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act requires that records be retained and available.
3. There are four reasons for retaining records:
 - A. **Administrative Value**
These are records that have value to the municipality if they assist in the performance of current or future activities. Normally these records lose their value shortly after completion of their activity. (Example is a routine response to an inquiry for information).
 - B. **Legal Value**
These types of documents usually do not diminish over a period of time and are usually required by legislation. (Examples are bylaws, minutes, land transactions and agreements/contracts)
 - C. **Fiscal Value**
These records relate to financial transactions (Examples are financial ledgers, debenture records, audit files, budget files, expenditure files etc)
 - D. **Research/Historical Value**
These records may contain information on persons, places and events as they relate to major milestones, history and development of the municipality and its citizens. These documents are often transferred to the public archives for long-term retention. (Example is 50th anniversary celebrations).
4. It is important that records move through the active, inactive and obsolete/destruction cycles, in order not to become overburdened with duplicate, obsolete and superfluous information. Therefore it will be necessary to determine what information held by the Town of Redcliff is to be considered a record and what information is deemed a transitory record.

5. In this procedure the following definitions apply:

Record means a record of information in any form and includes notes, images, audiovisual recordings, x-rays, books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers and papers and any other information that is written, photographed, recorded or stored in any manner, but does not include software or any mechanism that produces records

Transitory Record means a record which is only for the short term, of immediate or no value to the Town of Redcliff and won't be needed again in the future.

Examples of Transitory Records are:

- A) **Temporary Information**
Includes items such as telephone messages, routing slips, post-it notes, opened envelopes, memos, notes and messages (either paper, voice or electronic) where the information has only immediate or short term value. If the information in a record will have some future administrative, financial, legal, research or historical value, then it is not a transitory record and must be filed as per this policy.
- B) **Duplicates or Copies**
These are exact reproductions of a master copy and within the Town of Redcliff record system the terms duplicate and copy shall have the same meaning.
- C) **Draft Documents and Working Materials**
These are source materials used in preparation of documents and earlier versions of final documents.
- D) **Publications**
These are items such as books, magazines, periodicals, pamphlets, brochures, journals, newspapers and software documentation obtained from a source outside the Town of Redcliff.
- E) **Direct Mail**
This includes solicited or unsolicited information the Town of Redcliff receives from outside organizations advertising their products or services.
- F) **Blank Information Media**
This includes anything that was created, acquired for the purpose of collection or storing information but which has not been used and has become obsolete. Examples include:
 - i) obsolete blank forms
 - ii) information storage media such as video, audio or dictation tapes, diskettes, magnetic tapes, disk drives or optical disks where:
 - a) sensitive or confidential information was previously stored;
 - b) the information was erased according to an approved record retention and disposal schedule;
 - c) it is possible that someone could recover the erased information by technical means.

PROCEDURE

1. Each Town of Redcliff staff member will be responsible for determining if the information in his/her possession should be considered a record or transitory record.
2. If the information in your possession will have some future, administrative, financial, legal, research, or historical value to Town of Redcliff, then it should be deemed a record and filed in the Town of Redcliff record system.
3. Records maintained in the Town of Redcliff record system shall be maintained for the time periods outlined in the Records Retention Bylaw. The Municipal Manager has the discretion to extend the time period records are retained (ie. records applicable to a legal matter).
4. Each department shall purge the records under their care and control in their department on an annual basis, under the direction of the Manager of Legislative and Land Services, and arrange for transfer of closed files to the basement storage facility.
 - A. When records are identified and authorized for closure they should be clearly marked as follows:
 - i) File Closed after calendar year ending December 31, ???? and shall bear the designation CY???? (Calendar Year) and DY???? (Destruction Year)
 - ii) File closed after it is Superseded (replaced or take the place of) or Obsolete (no longer in use) and shall be designated as S/O
5. The Manager of Legislative & Land Services shall coordinate with the departments a purging of the basement storage record system on a minimum annual basis.
6. Record Disposal shall be as follows:
 - A) Transitory Record
Once the required activities of the temporary record have been performed then the record shall be deemed to have no further value and should be destroyed, however occasionally it may be determined the record is required to confirm dates of telephone calls, or postmarked envelopes and the rule shall be if you have any doubt the information is of value then it should be deemed a record and retained in the Town of Redcliff record system.
 - B) Duplicates or Copy
After the master copy is filed the duplicates or copies should be destroyed, anyone circulating a duplicate/copy or using a duplicate/copy should clearly identify the document as a duplicate or copy.

Anything that alters a duplicate/copy (such as handwritten notes or additional information on the documents) creates a new record and the document should be treated as a new record unless the information can be efficiently transposed into the original
 - C) Draft Documents and Working Materials
These documents are used for preparation only and should be discarded as a transitory record.

The exception in this category are drafts and working papers related to preparation of legislation, legal documents, budgets, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures which were originally created in your office and the information might have some future value to Town of Redcliff, these should be deemed a record and retained as such.

D) Publications

These documents have no future value and shall be discarded.

The exception is that if a publication is produced by or for the Town of Redcliff, then the original shall be deemed a record and retained in the Town of Redcliff records system.

E) Direct Mail

These documents have no future value and shall be discarded.

F) Blank Information Media

This media has no future value and shall be discarded.

7. Records shall be disposed of in the following methods:

A) Confidential Information shall be disposed of by:

- i) shredding the paper records or physically breaking electronic media records; or
- ii) burial of the materials at the landfill with the burial being supervised and a written confirmation of burial provided by employee in charge.

B) Non confidential information shall be disposed of in the normal garbage system or physically breaking electronic media records and disposing of same into the normal garbage system.

8. A record shall be maintained of records that have been disposed of and signed off by the Manager of Land and Legislative Services.

9. Property File Record System shall be considered to be independent of the Town of Redcliff General Record System and files in the Property File Record System shall be considered to be permanent files and not designated for destruction.

10. If an individual's personal information is used by the Town to make a decision that directly affects the individual, the information must be retained for at least one year after using it so the individual has a reasonable opportunity to obtain access to it.